

Contemp

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Submission date: 08-Dec-2020 09:49PM (UTC+0500)

Submission ID: 1468761170

File name: contemporary_conservative_movement.docx (21.25K)

Word count: 627

Character count: 3784

Running head: THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE MIND

The American Conservative Mind

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THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE MIND

The American conservative mind is a movement believed to have begun not long after World War II and gained full momentum by 1980 to a powerful political force (Gross et al., 2011). The central idea stems from the aspect of ordered liberty where the community and the people are engaged to promote individual freedom, responsibility, limited government, and unlimited markets. Researchers argue that conservatism has always played a vital role in politics and culture in America such as in policy making (Wehner & Gerson, 2014). This paper seeks to understand the origins of the contemporary conservative movement and the crucial events that led to its transformation into a powerful force in America.

Kirk (2001) established that conservatism is an honorable and respectable decision, and convincingly, an American tradition. Although the movement acquired its name, conservatism, in the postwar, it began much earlier, but with little recognition. The roots of the development are traced back three thousand years earlier, from the 18th century to five cities, Jerusalem, Rome, Athens, London, and Philadelphia. The Hebrew perspective of a purposeful moral existence under God in Jerusalem laid roots for its development.

The recognition grew to other cities with their self-awareness in philosophy, politics, law, social aspects (Edwards, 2003). The movement grew further with the integration of Christian understanding of human purpose, hope, and redemption. The establishment of parliament and guardian of common law, which occurred in London, contributed significantly to the roots of American order. The Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia and the writing of the constitution furthered the development of the movement. The events created a true national government where their powers were carefully enumerated, separated, and restrained (Shermer, 2008).

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The year 1953 is marked as a critical year when the American conservative movement was felt more, or rather evident. The inauguration of Dwight Eisenhower as president signaled the end of the New Deal era (Edwards, 2003). Many conservative intellectuals such as Russell Kirk, Robert Nisbet, and Richard Weaver took the opportunity to publish their ideas, which contributed significantly to a political shift. The political movement continued over the next 50 years through a succession of conservative intellectuals in various fields. The areas include philosophy, philanthropy, popularizers, and politics. The combined efforts in presenting ideas, translating, popularizing, and pushing for reforms, led to more conservative proposals taking the forefront in politics (Wehner & Gerson, 2014 & Howison, 2016).

In conclusion, a political movement has to go through a series of ideas, interpretation, execution, and support to establish itself. From playing a vital role in ending the Cold War, ending communism, and regulating the powers of the federal government, American conservatives created a political shift in the American history of politics. The conservative movement established its roots long before the Cold War and was thus, regarded as an American tradition. The revolution in conservatism, although a long time in the making, is, therefore, remade American politics.

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